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Edited by KATHLEEN BLISS

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NEWS-LETTER

FABIAN VON SCHLABRENDORFF

THE REFORMED CHURCH IN HUNGARY

"GOD WAS IN CHRIST"

SUPPLEMENT

THE CHURCH AND COMMUNISM—AN EXCHANGE OF LETTERS BETWEEN EMIL BRUNNER and KARL BARTH

ONLY NOW are the facts about the resistance to Hitler in Germany becoming known. We strongly commend to our readers a small book, *Revolt Against Hitler*,[1] which has just appeared. Mr. Trevor-Roper, whose knowledge of the inside of Nazi Germany is unsurpassed, has said in the *New English Review* that, as a narrative of the opposition by a member of it, "it is the best, the clearest and the most dramatic document we have". Dr. G. P. Gooch, in a foreword, says that nothing so far published "brings us quite so close to the heart of events as this simple gripping record by one of the few survivors of the long and hazardous campaign to destroy the half-crazy fanatic who shut the gates of mercy on mankind".

The book contains the personal account of the resistance by Fabian von Schlabrendorff, whose opposition to National Socialism began in his student days in Halle. As a lawyer in Berlin he defended the victims of Gestapo prosecutions. During the war he was given a post as staff officer to one of the Generals opposed to Hitler, and acted as go-between among the leaders of the resistance, and thus acquired an exceptional first-hand knowledge of the threads of the conspiracy. He himself early in 1943 placed in Hitler's aeroplane a bomb, which by accident failed to go off, and had the

[1] Eyre and Spottiswoode. 9s. 6d.

extraordinary good fortune to be able to recover the packet unopened after the flight.

Those engaged in the resistance were all the time aware that if their activities were discovered their lives would be forfeited and vengeance wreaked on their wives, children and relatives. The great majority of the names that occur in the volume have a footnote attached that the bearer of it was executed at such and such a date by the Nazis. The risks that had to be taken to enlist the support of those whose co-operation was essential were enormous. It was known before the attempt of July 20th, 1944, that Himmler had pretty full information about what was going on. Schlabrendorff relates in bare simple words the torture to which he was subjected after his arrest, not because he regards his own fate as of exceptional interest but because what he went through was typical of what many of his friends had to endure. They all made the discovery that a man can endure far more pain than he would have deemed possible. Those who had never learned to pray did so now, and found that prayer, and only prayer, can give comfort in such terrible straits and that it brings a more than human endurance.

THE CHRISTIAN ELEMENT IN THE RESISTANCE

There are two reasons why the story unfolded in this book should be widely known and often remembered in Christian circles. The first is that the book reveals the extent to which the resistance movement was inspired by Christian motives, and the way in which many of the leading actors were sustained in their trials by Christian faith. Protestant and Roman Catholic bishops and priests had a prominent part in it. The Kreisau Circle round Count von Moltke, about whom we have already written in the News Letter,[1] was composed of young men who were sincere believers in Christianity. Count von Stauffenberg, who planted the bomb on July 20th, 1944, was a member of an old South German Roman Catholic family, and his opposition to Hitler sprang directly from his Christian faith. The high officers who took part in the resistance were in many instances deeply religious men. Many who no longer

[1] C.N-L. No. 270.

professed Christianity were driven forward by a revulsion against meanness and beastliness, springing from impulses implanted in them by the Christian tradition. As one of them wrote, " We are all, whether we know it or not, imbued with the essential spirit of twenty centuries of Christianity".

The spirit by which many of them were actuated is conveyed by the letter of Count Lehndorff to his wife on the eve of his execution. " You must always keep in mind," he writes, " that I have not wantonly destroyed your future, but that I have been serving an idea that does not, I believe, allow consideration for family or private interests. During these last weeks it has become plain to me that all our steps and our fate are ultimately guided by God alone. I commend to your heart for the truth it contains, a verse of the Bible which has often given me strength : ' Do not grieve ; lay before God in all things your hopes, with prayers and supplication, and with thanksgiving '. If then our requests are not fulfilled, we must say to ourselves that God's ways are not our ways. The Christian faith and belief in a Kingdom of Heaven are our only help in distress. The road to Heaven must lead through sorrow, and all our treasured possessions must be forcibly torn from us, since only thus can we put on the new man. I shall die in this faith without fear or doubt. The verse chosen on my confirmation day shall lead me to the last : ' Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong '."

The Nazis were well aware that it was with this Christian spirit that they had to contend. The book contains striking evidence that they regarded Christianity as the real enemy. Schlabrendorff was told after his arrest that the first fact which established his complicity was that reading material including a Bible, found in his luggage, proved his Christian attitude. At an earlier period there came into his hands a document of historical importance. He was given by an SS officer, who had inwardly revolted against the evil of Nazism, his shorthand notes of a review of the situation by Himmler in the spring of 1943 to SS leaders specially summoned to Berlin. In this Himmler admitted frankly that the war was going badly, but insisted that it had to be carried through

successfully, " for it involved an issue of lasting historical importance. The possession of countries and provinces was not the real issue. The true goal of the SS was the destruction of Christianity throughout the world. For the time being, however, this ultimate aim was to be kept secret."

POLITICAL AIMS OF THE RESISTANCE

The second reason why the story told in this book deserves attention is that it shows that there were elements in Germany which aimed at establishing the political life of the country on Christian and liberal foundations. This is shown by the remarkable proclamation drawn up by Dr. Goerdeler, the chief political leader of the resistance, who would have been Prime Minister if the plot had succeeded. It is, of course, a question whether those who would have seized power would have succeeded in retaining it and in achieving their aims in the teeth of the forces of nihilism which had made possible the rise of Hitler and which the Nazis had actively fostered. But the intentions of the leaders of the resistance are made abundantly clear by the proclamation which would have been issued as one of the first acts of the new Government, part of which reads as follows :—

" Confidence must be based upon a regard for truth and the veneration of justice. Hitler rejected both truth and justice. In place of truth he set up propaganda ; and in place of justice, violence. By means of propaganda, and of the Gestapo, he maintained his tyranny. For him there existed only one ultimate value, the state. The state was above and outside justice and morality. The idea of individual right peculiar to Christianity as well as to the Germanic peoples was denied by him. In place of this caricature of a true state community, the Reich government will establish a state sympathetic to western Christian ideals based upon the principles of civic duty, loyalty, self-sacrifice and efficient service to the commonwealth, as well as upon respect for the individual and his rights as a human being. The Reich government initiates its work by subordinating the powers of the state to the laws of morality and justice. It affirms its respect for the individual, for the family, for

religious creeds, for the professional associations, for local administration and for the trade unions. It demands in return that all should feel pledged to the good of the community.

" It is self-evident that the Reich government must restore the dissemination of genuine information and the freedom of public opinion and its expression. The Reich government therefore declares war on the suppression and falsification of truth. The German people must be allowed to pierce the fog of propaganda and learn the truth and nothing but the truth.

" Without prejudice to the religious liberty of the individual, the Reich government affirms its adherence to the Christian faith, as to one of the fundamental forces which have shaped the German nation. The Reich government knows well that political measures are insufficient to restore the injured religious traditions and ordinances of the German people. All religious communities are to be free of state tutelage, and to follow their sacred mission. The Reich will protect them and their ministers."

THE REFORMED CHURCH IN HUNGARY

In the spring of this year Professor Karl Barth, professor of theology in Basle University, was invited by the Reformed Church of Hungary to lecture in Hungary. His visit gave him the chance of conference with many leading churchmen at a time when the new political and economic order was being established and the attitude of the Church to it was deeply exercising the minds of Hungarian Christians.

On his return Professor Barth wrote his impressions in a Swiss newspaper. He came back encouraged by what he saw. That did not apply, of course, to the political conditions, which neither he nor anybody he met regarded as satisfactory. He meant the positive impression he had of the Hungarian Reformed Christians, who are a fifth of the total population and, like the rest, have to put up with conditions neither easy nor pleasant. But notwithstanding this, Professor Barth to his surprise met more people who impressed him as tranquil and serene than he comes across

in Basle. He found the Christians whom he met occupied with real serious and burning questions. In relation to the Russians, to the " people's democracy ", and to the whole question of the tension between East and West he saw few signs of the state of nerves which many people in Switzerland look on as unavoidable. He came across much convincing humility and patience, alertness and bravery, a persevering faith and a closeness to eternal things that were not to be found in the same measure in his home surroundings. The forefathers of these people had endured for centuries under the Turkish yoke and after that under Hapsburg rule. He saw with his own eyes what a manly and practical affair thorough-going Calvinism can be even to-day.

This was in marked contrast to what he had seen on a previous visit to Hungary in 1936. The same individuals and circles in the Reformed Church were at that time, just as much as the rest of the nation, in a state of fury over the treaty of Trianon, seething with hatred of Czechs and Rumanians, and in a fever of nationalism. All that has completely gone, at least so far as the leaders of the Church and of theology are concerned, and perhaps more widely too. With hardly an exception the influential people in the Church look on what has happened since the entry of Hungary into the war on the side of Germany as a just judgment of God, and are resolved to endure it as such without rancour, and to face the future from that standpoint.

" That does not mean," Professor Barth says, " that the Reformed Church of Hungary is prepared to acknowledge as such the state system now in control. If it were to do so, it would put itself in a position of advantage as compared with the Roman Catholic Church. There have not been lacking tempting invitations from the Government side, but the Church has steadfastly declined them. It has given its approval honestly and expressly to particular measures, especially those relating to land reform even though they have important consequences for the Church itself; but it retains its freedom to disapprove, when it is judged necessary, of other measures of the Government. I met no Reformed Christian who was an unqualified defender and

adherent of the new system. The childish enthusiasm of the fiery, red Dean of Canterbury, who had visited Hungary shortly before me, only aroused their amazement. The Reformed Church is taking the risk of refusing to accede to the demand of the ruling power and party that it should make a decision, and that that decision should be in its own favour. It is in my view almost too anxious, more particularly in personal matters, to avoid any possibility of misunderstanding in this direction.

" On the other hand, the Reformed Church is resisting also the closer and greater temptation to follow the Roman Catholic lead and enter into fundamental opposition to the Government. It could by doing this win many friends. It is not easy for it to listen to the charge from the ranks of its own members that it is lukewarm, and that the only true Calvinist in Hungary to-day is the Roman Catholic Archbishop. How little well-disposed to the system the younger people are was made plain to me at Sarospatak where a quotation I made from Kant ('Have the courage to make use of your own understanding') provoked an entirely unanticipated but very significant storm of applause. But I did not meet a single responsible Reformed leader who held it to be the right Christian course to choose the way of fundamental political opposition. The impression that I gained of them was that they will not remain silent when they ought to speak. They are much too clear, however, about the mistakes of the past to allow themselves, now that they have to face the consequences of those mistakes, to have immediate recourse to a counterstroke. Their eyes also are too widely open to the social side of things for them to commit themselves to a complete rejection of Communism. They are too much aware of the weaknesses of the West to feel under an obligation to adopt a party attitude by choosing this political alternative.

" The most convincing evidence to me that the Reformed Church is on the right path is that I found it concerned primarily not with the question of the relations of East and West, nor with the memory of the Russian horrors nor with the question of the rightness or wrongness of the present

Government, but with its own positive task as a Church. Nor does that concern manifest itself, as too often in Germany, in an occupation that is apt to become wearisome with confessional, constitutional and liturgical questions, but rather as a deep concern about the proclamation of the age-long Word of God in fresh terms, which will certainly not come about without fundamental theological reflection —a concern for the evangelization in the first instance of the Reformed congregations as the pre-requisite for further meaningful work and basic decisions."

Following on this Prof. Barth wrote a pastoral letter to the Hungarian Reformed Church chiefly on the matter of the election of a successor to Bishop Ravasz. A knotty problem was raised for the Church by the fact that the State's known choice among the candidates was also the man whom the Church would be most likely to elect. Ought the Church to make a principle of asserting its independence? Prof. Barth advised against such a course. Other serious decisions have faced the Church. One was the Church's attitude to land reform. The Reformed Church spoke in favour of reform, although it meant a drastic cut in support for the Church's schools. The campaign against the State's intention to nationalize all schools was led by the Roman Catholic Church and has now been lost. On July 1st all church schools, except eight Catholic, one Lutheran, and four Reformed were nationalized, but in response to public protest the government decided against abolishing compulsory religious instruction. The matter of state subsidies affects the Churches severely. These will be steadily reduced until they disappear in twenty years' time.

"GOD WAS IN CHRIST"

We have received from Prof. Brunner the following letter, written after his reading of Prof. Donald Baillie's recent book *God was in Christ*.[1] Prof. Brunner writes :—

"I do not want to write a review, but just to pay a tribute to one of the finest pieces of theological work which I have come across for many years.

[1] Faber & Faber, 1948. 16s.

" It is rather exceptional that a book of dogmatic theology makes fascinating reading. This book does. One of the main reasons for this fact is that it starts with a question which looks like an either/or. The Jesus of history or the Christ of faith? In this false alternative the history of the last hundred years of theology is summed up. Professor Baillie shows the necessity as well as the onesidedness of both the historical and the christological movements and viewpoints. His own thesis, very similar to that of Martin Kaehler's fifty years ago, is: the Christ of faith is none other than the Jesus of history. This thesis is sustained by a thoroughly critical examination of the more recent work of *Leben-Jesu-Forschung* and of doctrinal christology. As in this context Dr. Baillie deals also with the position of dialectical theology, I want to say that his criticism is well grounded. What he says with reference to my book *The Mediator* (first published twenty years ago) I have been telling my students in my classroom for a good many years: that my book does not give the gospel *story* and the Jesus-*picture* of Jesus of the synoptic gospels their due place.

" The second half of the book, the fascination of which will be felt only by those who are not afraid of hard thinking, deals with the main christological doctrines, incarnation and atonement and, as their background, the problem of the Trinity. Why is it that the reader who really enters the writer's argument never gets that feeling which so often is connected with 'technical theology'? The answer is simple: because the author never gives room to this terrible misunderstanding that christology is 'technical theology'. What he, very successfully, tries to show is that to understand these high doctrines on the significance of Jesus Christ is nothing else and nothing less than to understand our own life, human reality, in the light of divine revelation, i.e. of divine reality. It is particularly in the section of the fifth chapter, which he calls 'the central paradox' that Prof. Baillie makes a remarkable effort to break through the traditional frame of objective doctrine and to link up the biblical message of incarnation with the centre of all Christian understanding of man: man's absolute

dependence on God's grace, identified paradoxically with man's responsibility. It is the energy with which all christological problems are brought to this focus which gives the book its unusual 'relevance' to every man's life problem, and which accounts for the almost complete absence of 'abstract theology'. This is the more to be praised as the author forgets none of the time honoured conceptions of orthodox christology and evades none of the difficult problems involved in them.

"Perhaps as I have after all written something of a review I ought to do justice to what is expected of a reviewer and try to find some points of disagreement wherein the reviewer usually shows his superior wisdom. But whether it is due to my great admiration and deep friendship for the author or to a precocious 'mildness of old age'—at any rate I cannot find anything worth mentioning to criticize. At one point I may not be competent to pass judgment, not being English-born, that is in the matter of style. But if good style is the one which makes reading a joy and confers the feeling of complete communication of thought, this book is certainly extremely well written."

THE SUPPLEMENT

After this News-Letter had been written we received from Dr. E. G. Homrighausen, an American member of the World Council of Churches Reconstruction Department at Geneva, a summary which he had made of an exchange of correspondence between Professor Emil Brunner and Professor Karl Barth, arising out of Professor Barth's comments on his visit to Hungary. We are grateful to Dr. Homrighausen for allowing us to publish his summary.

Kathleen Bliss

P.S. The Mission to London undertaken by the Diocese has not, as stated in the last supplement, taken place. The campaign of preparation is in progress and the Mission will take place in May, 1949.

THE CHURCH AND COMMUNISM

An exchange of letters between EMIL BRUNNER AND KARL BARTH

On his return from a visit to the Reformed Church of Hungary, Professor Karl Barth published in the Swiss Reformed Church newspaper an impression of his visit. Professor Emil Brunner, of Zurich, then wrote an open letter to Karl Barth under the title—*How shall one understand this?* in the same newspaper (June 10th, 1948).

The following is a summary of Professor Brunner's letter :—

BRUNNER'S CHALLENGE

Brunner is puzzled by some of the remarks made by Barth in his report on Hungary. Many, even of those who are quite sympathetic with Barth, are somewhat estranged from him by his position regarding the political problem of the Church and Russian Communism. It is known that ever since the close of the war, Barth has not been willing to take a stand against Communism, even though he may not be termed friendly towards it. Recalling the attitude of Barth towards the Brown Shirt terror, Brunner had thought that perhaps Barth would take the same stand against the " Red Power " of the East when once it manifested itself in its true character. Brunner thought that Barth might undergo the same development which Reinhold Niebuhr underwent ; he first seemed to disagree with those who stood against Communism, but changed his mind after he had experienced " the eastern monster " in a visit to Berlin. That Barth has not developed in this way, especially after Prague, puzzles Brunner, and is the occasion for his open letter.

Brunner states that Barth has recently said that the Church must not allow itself to be drawn into the position of fundamental antagonism to Communism. Barth's report concerning Hungary stated that the Christian people of that land are not in a state of " nervousness " concerning the " people's democracy ", a state which grips the people of Switzerland. Barth seems to agree

with Hromadka and Hermann Diem,[1] the first of whom regards Czech Communism as different from the Russian, and the latter of whom believes that, as regards Communism, the Church should not reject it, but work with it and wait to see what it will do.

All of this is simply unintelligible to Brunner, who regards Communism as a totalitarianism like all other totalitarianisms. Certainly, he grants that there is a difference between the Red and the Brown totalitianism. The question for Brunner, which he addresses to Barth, is one which confronts many people—Americans, Germans, British: Is not the totalitarianism of Communism such that the Church must of necessity, and with unambiguity and passion, say NO, just as it said NO to Hitler?

Brunner then goes on to elaborate his question in ten points. He states that Barth, even in his fight against Nazism, never did attack totalitarianism. Why? Is not totalitarianism in "principle" unrighteous and inhuman? The problem is not concentrated in the contradictions—East versus West, Communism versus Capitalism. But when nations, whether East or West, are overpowered, then the Church faces a decision. Surely there is no quarrel about Communism, if by that is meant the desire of social justice. There are Christian possibilities in Communism; but the *existing* Communism leads logically to totalitarianism. The question for the Church is not whether it will take a negative stand against Communism, but whether it will say NO to a total state which if consistent must be Communistic. Nor is the question for the Church one that deals with social justice. Certainly there is great injustice in the capitalistic order. Brunner is for certain state control and even ownership. There is a strong movement towards the correction of these abuses in the capitalistic order. But the issue is not between capitalism and radical socialism.

Brunner recalls that Barth is still a socialist, but he also reminds him of the fact that socialism is not authoritarian and that Communism seeks to destroy socialism. Shall we allow socialism to be assassinated by our refusal to say anything as Christians

[1] A pastor of the German Evangelical Church—author of a much discussed pamphlet.

against its murderers? Must not Christians join with socialists in this battle? To remain silent is to deny a fundamental Christian "principle" which Christians must never do. The total state does not recognize the natural rights of human personality. The state is everything. Such a total state is also atheistic by its very nature. Brunner's question is: can the Church do anything other than say an absolute and passionate NO to this total state?

And as for the counter-remark that is often made—that we must not say anything against the total state of Communism because there are some things for which it stands which we cannot deny—this sounds like the replies which were made regarding Hitler's state. There are some things in the Communistic total state which we cannot gainsay. But the devil is always masking a lie in the garment of truth.

Brunner recalls that Hromadka of Prague takes practically the same position as Barth, in that he interprets the present situation as an historical necessity. Old liberal forces have spent themselves and are powerless to form the new order. Brunner acknowledges that there may be times when the Christian is faced with conditions over which he has no control; but to sanction them with a theology of necessity is dangerous. What will Barth and his friends say, when one day this total state collapses and is judged as Hitler's total state is judged?

As for aligning the Protestant Church with Roman Catholicism in its anti-Communist stand, Brunner asks: just because the Catholic Church takes that stand, must the Protestant Church stand aside? Did not Protestants and Catholics stand side by side against the Hitler régime? A doctrine is not false because the Catholic Church expresses it. And as for the Hungarians, let it be said, says Brunner on the basis of some information about the situation, there are many who now are rather disillusioned about the "new order", as they see their rights and freedoms go into oblivion.

Brunner closes with the remark that he and others cannot understand how Barth, who was so vehement against even those who *seemed* to be collaborators with Hitler should now take this present position and call those "nervous" who have misgivings about this devilish system of unrighteousness and inhumanity.

The reply of Barth is characteristic. He does not take up Brunner's ten points one by one. He simply says: "I shall go immediately to the essential aspect of the matter". Of course, Barth chides Brunner for taking such a mediating attitude towards Hitler in 1933–4, when Barth was making his head-on attack on Nazism. Brunner then cautioned mediation! Barth also wonders whether Brunner's talk about "Christian principles" of action really has any bearing upon the immediate situation in Hungary, for the Christian does not act by unchanging principles, but on the authority of the Word of God in concrete situations. Barth says very simply, what obtained in 1933 simply does not obtain in 1948. The situation is different and the Word which must be spoken to-day must be formulated afresh.

Barth states that the position of the Church in political matters is determined at the concrete point where the Church faces the necessity to speak responsibly out of the Word of God. The Church has nothing, as such, to do with timeless isms and systems, but with the Word of God in historical situations. The Church does not speak according to "principles". She makes her judgment in this and that situation. One day she may speak and another day she may be silent. She declines to systematize her actions in political situations. She insists upon keeping her freedom to speak in different situations, when the time has come to speak.

Such a concrete situation was confronted by the Church from 1933 onwards. There was something about Hitler's régime that represented a temptation to the Church. Many an American, British and Frenchman admired Hitler. Even Churchill had something good to say about him! The nations allowed themselves to be seduced by this system. It was not a question of totalitarianism particularly, nor of nihilism, nor of anti-semitism! Hitlerism had a charm about it which overwhelmed men's souls and made them believe its lies. As a false God, we at first offered him incense, and later brought our whole offering. It was then a matter of life and death, since Nazism was a "masked godlessness". Barth says that these are the reasons why he at that time

would not compromise, nor could he forgive any who in any wise would collaborate with it.

The question to-day is : Are we faced with the same situation as we confront Communism ? Can we apply what we said then against Nazism to Communism to-day ? Barth has seen western Germany, and the non-Russian sectors of Berlin. He knows the fear, the hate and the repugnance which is felt towards this " eastern monster ". But among all those who have this feeling against Communism, there is not one who regards Communism as a temptation which constitutes a danger. None of these people will go along with Communism except for a few Communists. Is this not also true of those who live in America, England and France ? We do not need to read *I Chose Freedom* to be convinced that this new ordering of life under Soviet power is not acceptable. Who will contradict that ? A few Communists, perhaps. Whoever wants a political negation from me against this system and method can have it immediately, says Barth, but it is rather cheap to give it, cheap to have ! Barth says he cannot admit that it is a Christian, a Church, responsibility to say now what every citizen can read in his newspaper, and what Mr. Truman and the Pope are saying so well.

Has the " East ", or whatever one may call it, such a power over us that we must react against it with a final word ? Surely the Church to-day has no cause to give its witness regarding Communism, because Communism is not worth it, whether because of its marxistic, imperialistic or—let us say it—its Asiatic elements.

But, must the Church go with the tide ? Even with America and the papacy ? Simply because it is written in our university professors' notes since 1934—and perhaps rightly—that totalitarianism is a destructive thing ? Where is the spiritual danger and need that the Church should give a witness to this truth ? What the occasion ? Whom would the Church instruct, set right, comfort, or call to repentance and new life thereby ? Certainly not the nations of the " Christian " West, certainly not the Americans ! Are they not secure enough against Russia even without such a correct formula and without our Christian assistance ? Certainly not the poor Russians and the poor Communists at all !

Then how shall they (the Russians) understand the Western Church which has gone along with totalitarianism in the past without making a confession against it, but just now seems to have *their* totalitarianism on its heart? And how shall the Church behind the iron curtain understand this? We—who are not asked about the matter and for whom it costs nothing—will not have helped them one bit by such utterances.

Therefore, says Barth, he is of the opinion that the Church faces a situation entirely different from that of 1933–1945, and that we should stay out of this present-day conflict and not prematurely shoot off our ammunition. We should wait patiently and see if and in what way the situation may become earnest and ripe for some expression. If a concrete situation should arise as it did in 1933–1945—and we do not know from what direction it may come—and we are asked for an answer, then we shall see whether and in how far we may have to face the situation which has developed. Then it may be that we shall have to do not with timeless " principles " to which Brunner wishes to win me, says Barth. In any case, we shall then start with the first sentence of the Barmen Declaration, which at that time was rather distasteful to Brunner, who cautioned a more moderate position.

Barth goes on to say that he went to Hungary with no neat rules to give his brethren. He told the Hungarian Church leaders to walk the thin line between Moscow and Rome. Their situation, however, is quite different from that which obtains in Switzerland, or that which obtained in the German Church struggle. Their attempts to make a concordat with their new state is something quite different from the middle party position which existed in Germany between Church and state, and that which was championed by the German Christians.

Barth closes his letter by adding that for the Hungarians, and not merely for the Hungarians, everything depends not upon the Church adhering to " principles ", but upon the Church's attachment to its Lord. He bids the Church to seek and find its own way and to learn to find the time to speak and to be quiet, so that it may not, through any law which is not the Gospel, allow itself to be led into error.

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